Remarks

Applicants bring to the Examiner's attention the additional references listed on the attached Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement Form PTO/SB/08 (1 sheet). Copies of these references are enclosed. It is respectfully requested that the listed references be made of record in the present application.

Claims 1-3, 5-13, 15-20, 23-27, 29-36, 38-43 and 46-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Corlett in view of Guercio. This rejection is respectfully traversed. However, base claims 1, 8, 17, 25, 31 and 40 have been amended to improve their form.

The invention is directed to a technique for receiving a message provided by a calling party for a called party after a call is unanswered, and storing in storage both the message and data concerning the calling party's telephone number (e.g., ANI). Such telephone number data is stored in association with the message in the storage. (Specification, page 17, lines 9-13.) When the message is subsequently delivered to the called party, the called party is given an option to call back to the calling party. (Specification, page 2, lines 18-28.) Upon receiving a designated signal from the called party (e.g., generated by pressing a predetermined key on the telephone), the calling party's telephone number stored in association with the message is retrieved from the storage. A call is then initiated to the calling party based on the retrieved telephone number, thereby connecting the called party to the calling party. (Specification, page 22, lines 9-26.).

Corlett discloses a technique for storing a message from a calling party intended for a called party. However, as agreed by the Examiner, Corlett fails to teach or suggest a switch interface "retrieving from the storage the data concerning the telephone number," which is stored in association with the message provided by the caller for returning the caller's call, as in the claimed invention. Page 3 of the Office Action. Nor does Guercio teach or suggest the same.

Guercio discloses a telephone system for announcing a calling party's name to the user/called party when the system receives a call, thereby allowing the user/called party to screen the call before answering it. Such an audible announcement is particularly helpful when the user/called party is not in the vicinity of a ringing telephone to read a Caller ID display. To that

end, the user/called party stores, in the Guercio system, telephone numbers and associated voice messages containing the names of the anticipated calling parties corresponding to the stored telephone numbers. (Guercio, col. 1, lines 48-50.) When an incoming call is received, the calling party's telephone number is extracted from the caller ID signal, and a search is performed to determine whether the calling party's telephone number matches one of the stored telephone numbers. (Guercio, col. 4, lines 24-30.) If a stored telephone number matches the calling party's telephone number, the associated message containing the name of the calling party is retrieved from storage and played to the user/called party. (Guercio, col. 4, lines 30-43.)

At the outset, Guercio does not even apply to the claimed invention as the voice messages containing the respective calling party's names are recorded by the user/called party of the Guercio system for call screening purposes. Moreover, the Guercio system does not retrieve any telephone number data in response to a "signal generated by the called party" as claims 1 and 25 recite, or to a "predetermined signal from the called (or destination) station" as claims 8 and 31 (or claims 17 and 40) recite. Guercio at best discloses a retrieval of the telephone number data in response to a caller ID signal, which, however, is not a signal generated by the called party, or predetermined, or from the called (or destination) station as required by the claimed invention. In fact, Guercio teaches away from the claimed invention by "requir[ing] the one or more telephone numbers and associated voice messages be provided by the [user/called party]" (Guercio, col. 3, lines 35- 39). By contrast, in the claimed invention, the message stored in association with the telephone number data is "provided by the caller," as claims 1, 8, 17, 25, 31 and 40 also recite. Emphasis added. As such, claims 1, 8, 17, 25, 31 and 40, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over Corlett in view of Guercio.

The Examiner also rejected claims 4, 14, 21-22, 28, 37, 44 and 45 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Corlett in view of Guercio and further in view of Hammond.

According to the Examiner, Hammond discloses derivation of a telephone number from an automatic number identifier. Even assuming, arguendo, that the Examiner's characterization of Hammond is correct, claims 4, 14, 21, 22, 28, 37, 44 and 45 are patentable over the cited art by virtue of their dependency from claims 1, 8, 17, 25, 31 and 40 for the reasons stated above.

-11-

In view of the foregoing, each of claims 1-47, as amended, is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of these claims is requested and allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully,

By _____
Alex L. Yip
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 34,759
212-836-7363

Date: November 6, 2003